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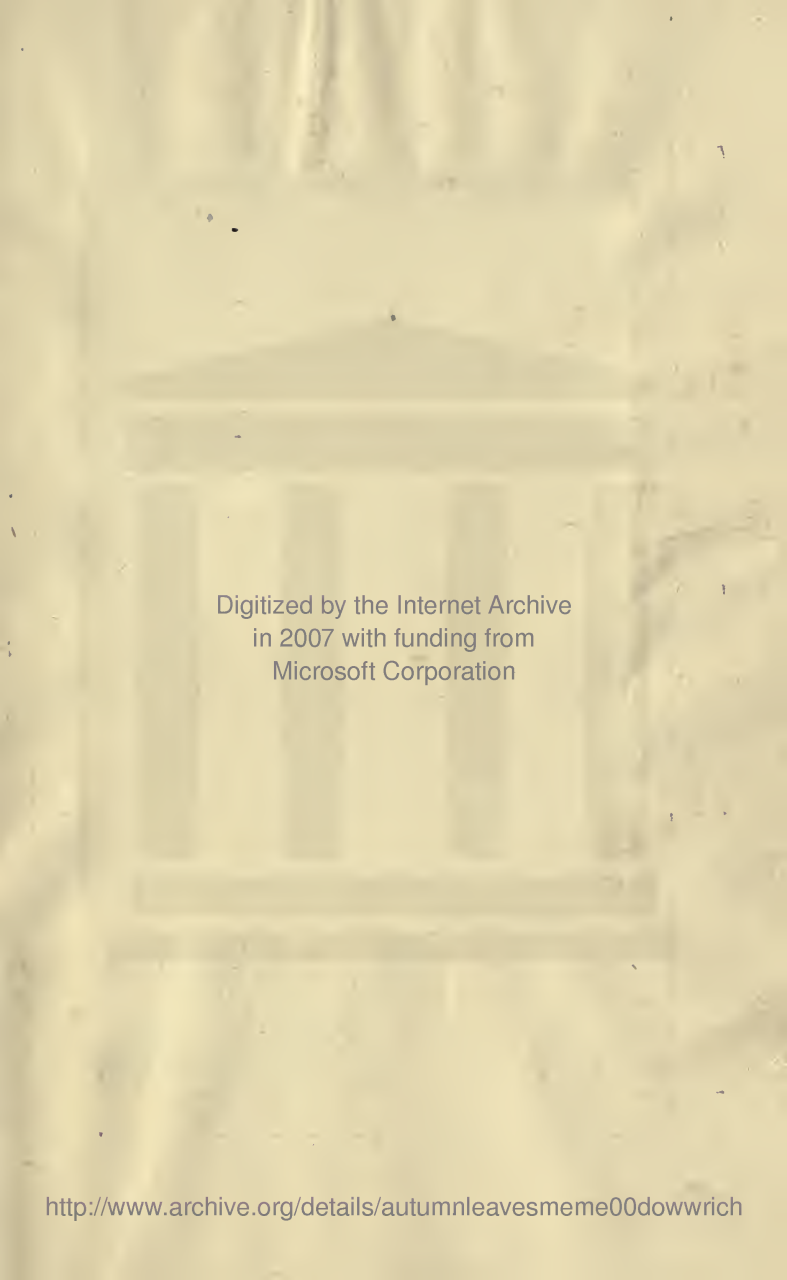
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Autumn Leaves,

A symmetrical decorative ornament featuring a central floral motif with scrolling vines and leaves extending outwards.

WILLIAM DOW.





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JAMES RUTHERFORD.

*Yours faithfully
William Dow.*

AUTUMN LEAVES:

Mementoes of a Flowerless & Fruitless Summer.

BY

WILLIAM DOW,

GLASGOW.

“THEY best can judge a poet’s worth
Who oft themselves have known
The pangs of a poetic birth
By labours of their own.”—*Cowper*.

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Dedication.

FOR these "AUTUMN LEAVES" I can find no fitter dedication than to the dear departed one who enjoyed most of them in their vernal prime, and who, had her own Autumn not come too soon, would have gladly welcomed them as they now appear. I believe she may still do so, even from the Summer Land which knows no fading; and—remembering how to her and me the withering woodland waifs had used to whisper, not only of the Winter fast approaching, but also of another Spring-time sure to follow—I fondly strew these at her feet, hoping for them a similar suggestiveness. Autumn were indeed a sombre season could we not, "like trees in Winter-time," wait with hope and patience—

"till the wreathes

Of Winter fade before the breath

Of Spring, when we shall vanquish Death,

And wake our wondering eyes in light

To which our present day is night!"

W. D.

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AUTUMN LEAVES.

Day-Dreaming.

WITHIN the shadow of the trees
The playworn boy has found repose,
While Summer noonday's languid breeze
In soothing softness round him blows.

He sleeps not, but his dreamy eyes
In wonder wander far and near:
The verdant earth and azure skies
To him mild mysteries appear.

But mysteries which yield delight,
Though he may never search them out:—
He lives by faith as well as sight,
And holds no fellowship with doubt.

Behold the envy in his eye
 As yon free rovers of the air
 On downy wings glide swiftly by,
 With power to visit everywhere.

“What bliss!”—he dreams:—“Could I have wings
 To soar like these, and roam the sky,
 The bird the merriest song that sings
 Should not be happier than I.”

O'er field and forest, heath and hill,
 And through the fragrant flow'ry glen,
 Long summer days to roam at will—
 Untroubled by the cares of men.

On mountain-tops to set me down,
 Without the toil of climbing there;
 A king uncumbered with a crown—
 My kingdom all the earth and air.

And then, O such delicious play,
 When playmates, still to earth confined,
 To school should drag their dreary way,
 For me to leave them all behind!

Or condescend to join their sports
 For but a moment;—then away
 To seek my happier resorts,
 And laugh at their imprisoned play!”

So dreams the boy, and thus the boy
 Is fairly “father to the man,”
 For who loves not deep draughts of joy
 From fountains far in dreamland drawn?

Joys real and present, great howe’er,
 Our souls, insatiate, only prize
 As pedestals on which to rear
 Our Babel towers of fantasies.

Fain would we scan the future; but
 In vain our ever-prying gaze:
 A veil we cannot pierce has shut
 From us the view of future days:

A veil the present hour which leaves
 But half-revealed to mortal eyes,
 While Time within the other weaves
 Life’s wonderous web of mysteries.

Above, below, at every nook,
We seek some parting rent or seam
Through which to cast a stealthy look
Adown the still and hidden stream:

But no, we cannot see nor hear
The voiceless world reposing there;
Those mystic realms which hope and fear
Alternately paint foul and fair.

Defeated, but determined not
To own defeat, the height we climb
Where Fancy lends the power to thought,
In realms unknown to soar sublime.

There, in a future of our own
Creating, great in dream-wrought deeds,
We trifle till our lives have grown
To worthless wastes of tangled weeds.

This should not be; our day is brief,
And long the task awaiting toil;
Day-dreaming is the veriest thief
That ever purloined precious spoil.

Time bears us on—on with the throng
 Of thousands voyaging its breast,
 And ever as we glide along—
 If not unwilling—some behest

Of duty calls us to arise,
 And nobly lend a helping hand—
 Perhaps to soothe the sufferer's sighs:—
 Perhaps oppression to withstand.

And blessèd most are they who hear
 Most readily affliction's claim:—
 Whose hands have oftenest wiped the tear,
 Or gently fanned Hope's fading flame.

Then let us wake to truer life;—
 Burst these somnambulistic chains,
 And, boldly mingling in the strife,
 Rest not till Right triumphant reigns!

The Wood.

WHAT is it in the sylvan shade
 That so enraptures soul and sense
 With solemn gladness, too intense
 To be by poet's pen portrayed?

A fond communion of the soul
 With spirits wooing weary thought
 Away from cares the world hath wrought,
 To joys beyond the world's control.

We catch the cadence from above
 Of intercourse they cherish there,
 Distilling through the leafy air
 In sacred symphonies of love.

Above, around, the mystic maze
 Of arch and pillar forms a fane
 Where seraphs sing in praiseful strain,
 And Nature's fragrant censer sways.

Beneath, the perfect stillness seems
 The slumber of a soothing lay,
 As eloquent as is the play
 Of infant features fondling dreams.

While on the ground the shadows wreathe
 And mingle with the scattered rays,
 As if transcribing songs of praise—
 The music that the zephyrs breathe.

And every flower that nestles there
 On grassy knoll and moss-wove sward,
 Seems rapt, in worshipful regard,
 At Nature's shrine to whisper prayer.

O, it is good to seek and prize
 Such scenes of love, and peace, and truth—
 To let the soul renew its youth
 In those near portals of the skies.

Yet even there we must not plod,
 Content with only Nature's charms ;
 Faith must apply her graceful arms
 And wings to bear us up to God.

For though in Nature God has shewn
 His radiant glory everywhere,
 His presence is but shadowed there
 Who dwells apart,—sublime, alone!

To the Clyde.

ONCE more with thee, my mountain maid,
 My fair, my queenly Clyde,
 I wander through the leafy shade,
 O'er verdant lea and flow'ry glade,
 A lover by thy side:

A lover! Yes; for long ago
 Thy beauty won my heart;
 And though I breathed no ardent vow,
 Methinks thou may'st remember now
 When we were doomed to part:

How, on a sunny summer eve
 I sought yon lonely dell,
 In calm seclusion there to grieve
 The fate that forced my feet to leave
 The scenes I loved so well.

And how, when sunset's golden glow
 Forsook thy placid breast,
 I lingered still to list thy flow,
 Half-fancying thou did'st murmur so
 To soothe my soul to rest.

The night, with me to sympathise,
 Assumed her sable pall,
 And gazing down with pensive eyes,
 Let tears of starlight from the skies
 Upon thy bosom fall.

Unprized by thee, they glistened there,
 But tears from me that fell
 Were treasured up with miser care,
 And hid within thy bosom fair,
 My heart's deep love to tell.

Since then, beyond yon mighty sea
 To which thy waters glide,
 I've rivers seen more grand than thee,
 Yet met with none so dear to me
 As thou, my lovely Clyde! *

Niagara's terrific din
 And rainbowed turbulence,
 Though grander than thy Corra-Linn,
 Yet ne'er like it my heart could win
 To love's own reverence.

The Amazon, in giant pride,
 Spurns off affection's chains,
 Even as it braves the ocean tide
 And pours its torrents far and wide
 Into the sea's domains.

* This is rather a stretch of poetic license, the author never having crossed the Atlantic, except in imagination. He trusts the extravagance may be excused on account of the comparisons it affords so favourable to the river of his song.

Missouri's wild and turbid waves—

A channel-fettered sea—

Irate at all obstruction, raves

And dashes on, nor gives, nor craves

One look of sympathy.

Not so with thee, calm, homely Clyde.

Where'er thy current rolls

It seems thy aim, thy joy, thy pride,

A feast of beauty to provide

For beauty-loving souls.

That feast of thine with calm delight

I'll share, nor seek to roam

In quest of joys more fair, more bright,

Than those that charm my soul, my sight,

Round this my Clydesdale home

To Bothwell Castle.

§ UBLIME old monument of glory faded—
 Of powers and passions of the ancient days!
 With pensive thoughts I feel my soul pervaded,
 As on thy slowly-crumbling walls I gaze.

Yet heave I not a single sigh for thee;
 Thee in thy pride I wish not to have known;
 Far better as thou art! for here I see,
 In Grandeur's ruin, Ruin's grandeur shown.

As once in thee proud lords in feudal glory
 Received their guests from far-dissevered lands,
 So now, as Fancy reads thy silent story,
 She views far-severed ages shaking hands.

As granite mountain peaks their tale unfold
 Of wild commotions, once the earth upheaving,
 So speak thy towers of men and ages old,
 When feuds and wars our country filled with grieving.

But now, how changed ! As hills in turmoil born
Become the emblems of what changes not,
So thou, in ruin, desolate, forlorn,
Proclaimest present peace, and wars forgot.

Grim, hoary preacher ! " Peace on earth " proclaiming—
One-half the Gospel—not in promise given,
But realised ; strife-loving man reclaiming,
And softly tinging earth with hues of heaven.

While in the Eden-beauties round thee glowing,
" Good-will-to-men," the listening spirit hears ;—
The sermon and the song in concert flowing—
A harmony unheard by common ears.

To Robin Redbreast.

SWEET warbler of the shady grove,
 Could I but make my home with thee,
 No more should I desire to rove
 In quest of joy, by land or sea:
 O could this weary heart of mine
 But rest in tranquil bliss like thine!

In dancing Summer's brightest morn,
 When nature sings in merriest glee,
 But when, with cares and toils outworn,
 The scene seems all too glad for me,
 I love to linger through the shade
 Where thou, with peace, thy home hast made.

But now, alas, it comes to mind
 That summer dwells not always there;
 Rude wintry storms must also find
 Thy calm retreat, and make it wear
 A cold, forlorn, and cheerless guise,
 Which neither you nor I can prize.

And then, as I have sought you here,
And lingered 'neath this sylvan dome,
Shalt thou as lovingly appear
Within the shadow of my home,
To ask, with calm confiding eye,
The food which then the woods deny.

And even then, I know full well,
For I have seen thee oft before,
Thy still, reposeful look shall tell
That surly storms, which rudely tore
Thee from thy home, could ne'er molest
The peace that nestles in thy breast!

So let me learn to rest no more
My hopes of bliss on outward things,
But in my heart that peace to store
Which never-failing gladness brings;
For hearts where such a peace resides
Alone can bear life's changing tides.

The Forget-Me-Not.

BY Dee's sylvan margin, when day was declining,
 I lovingly lingered alone with my muse,
 Inspired by the beauties of Nature, reclining
 In glory which gloaming alone can diffuse.

As twilight descended, I rose to depart,
 But, rising, beheld what 'twas pleasure to see:—
 A pensive Forget-me-not smiled to my heart,
 As if 'twere imploring remembrance from me.

I gazed, as when Love gazes into blue eyes,
 And finds itself mirrored and magnified there,
 Till, even as Love longs to cherish its prize,
 I felt I must needs have the flower in my care.

But, ere I could pluck it, my hand was delayed—
 My being all bathed in betwitching prostration,
 As Feeling, or Fancy, or Fairies conveyed
 A song of which this is a faint iteration:—

Stay, stay, we have come on the Zephyr's soft wing,
 The twilight to spend in this sylvan retreat:
 A chalice of nectarine dewdrops we bring
 To banquet our children, those flow'rets so sweet.

And that starry blossom to memory dearest,
 Is dearest to us—sweetest child of our love;
 Its hue and its fashion resemble the nearest
 Those beauties that bloom in our gardens above.

Delighted, we witnessed the fond admiration
 That glistened thine eyes as thy head was bowed down
 To view the dear emblem in calm meditation;—
 Where now has thy love of the beautiful flown?

Place thou the bright gem in thy breast, it will fade
 In less than an hour, and its beauty depart:
 Nay—leave it to bloom in its own native shade,
 And treasure its image imprest on thy heart.

Would'st send it to Mary, commissioned to bear
 Thy pleading for love and remembrance enduring?
 Then spare it, and swift on the wings of the air
 We'll whisper thy message by means more alluring.

To-night, having soothed her to softest repose,
 We'll waft her to dreamland to lean on thy breast,
 Then show her the love in thy bosom that glows—
 A plea more persuasive than flower e'er exprest.

Primrosina.

Respectfully dedicated to Miss Jane K., the author of the sentiment.

“They also serve who stand and wait.”—MILTON.

WHERE wood and water wooed the sun,
 A Primrose found its life begun,
 Nor knew nor cared how long 'twould run.

One day, or two—perhaps for three,
 It simply knew the luxury
 Of feeling what it is “to be.”

But as it looked and listened round
 It found the world alive with sound,
 From sunny air to sunlit ground:—

The hum of insects busy nigh,
The river's ripple rolling by,
The lark's song thrilling through the sky.

Each sound and motion seemed to say
"All, all are busy, night and day,
In blissful work or buoyant play."

Then why, it mused, where work is rife,
Should I slip sleepily through life
And gain no glory in the strife?

I drink the sunbeam's light and heat,
Enjoy the skylark's music sweet,
And envy bees their burdened feet.

But I, I really cannot see
What I can do, why I should be,
I am but painted vanity.

Last night I blushed, then paler grew,
As Zephyrs christened me with dew,
And whispered, Primrose,—what do you?

'Twas, How do ye do? the Zephyrs said,
Well-pleased to greet the graceful maid
That so adorned the woodland shade.

But she, too modest, ne'er had thought
By blooming there her work was wrought,
And so she answered, I do nought.

All night she dreamt of dreary day,
And, waking early strove to pray,
"O give me work, if work I may."

Two tiny feet came tripping through
The grass that lay love-sick with dew,
While joyance gemmed two eyes of blue.

One little loving hand embraced
And plucked the Primrose, then in haste
The tiny feet their steps retraced.

As loving mother chides her child,
Then fondles it in transport wild,
So Mary plucked the flower, and smiled.

She thought of one at home, who could
No more explore that long-loved wood,
To whom this flow'ret would bring good.

"Alas, alas, the captive sighed,
My hope is gone, my prayer denied;"
"No, no," a soft sweet voice replied.

So, soon on mother's couch it lies
Where she reclines, no more to rise,
And thus her longing satisfies!

For she for weary months had prayed
Her last adieu might be delayed
Till Spring once more adorned the glade.

O Primrose, now no more complain,
Nor think thy brief still life in vain:
It soothed a dying mother's pain.

Thy mission was a work begun,
Which angels seeing, sang "Well done,"
Then wafted her beyond the sun.

And there fulfilled thy promise true,
 Gave her a Spring for ever new,
 A Spring for ever wed with you.

For thus thy fairy form has found
 A place in Mem'ry's amber bound,
 'Mong flowers that gem celestial ground!

On the Mountain Top.

THOUGH aching limbs and panting breast
 Of over-exercise complain,
 The pleasure far transcends the pain
 Of climbing to the mountain's crest.

For thus 'tis not dull flesh alone
 We elevate—our minds expand,
 Aspire, and feel they may command
 A greatness hitherto unknown.

The breeze that brushes round our brows
 Where nature holds us up to heaven,
 Baptizes us with vigour given
 To vanquish soul's enslaving foes ;

And, looking with enraptured eyes
 On hill-tops crouching at our feet,
 We feel how grand it is to greet
 Success where effort gasping lies.

Above that vast expanse of earth,
 Here sternly grand—there richly fair,
 Beneath yon vaster azure air
 We guess the grandeur of our birth ;

And swelling thoughts and surging sighs
 Assert our instinct to ascend
 Beyond the mortal, and to blend
 Our lives with life that never dies.

O blessed mountains! First in light
 As Morning's banner floats unfurled,
 And last to lose it when the world
 Is wrapt again in robes of night!

So heavenward looks my longing soul,
 Inspiring radiance to derive,
 And hope and strength, anew to strive
 And struggle on to glory's goal.

And so, I trust, when night descends
 For me on Time's few fleeting days,
 To quit their last receding rays
 For cloudless day that never ends.

A Thunder Storm.

THE sun went down in perfect peace,
 And twilight swathed the dying day,
 While restful night bade Labour cease,
 Inviting pious souls to pray;
 In prayerful praise all Nature knelt
 Within the veil where Godhead dwelt.

'Tis night of night, and peace hath found
 Her perfect work where Summer sleeps;
 But deeper darkness glooms around,
 And terror through the stillness creeps;
 Tempestuous fires explode the night,
 And Nature trembles with affright.

Peal after peal, from far and near,
 Crash into one continuous roar,
 Till trembling hearts begin to fear
 That Nature soon shall be no more;
 Earth's final fires seem lit from heaven—
 Its sepulchres by thunder riven.

Yet fear I not those lurid fires,
 Nor tremble 'mid the uproar wild;
 Sublimar joy my soul inspires
 Than when around me Nature smiled;
 This Sinai scene, O Lord, is thine,
 And Thou art here—and Thou art mine.

Poor craven soul! think shame to show
 Thy fear of Him thou wilt not love!
 His blessings every hour to know,
 Yet lift no grateful eye above!
 Too cold His gracious smiles to own,
 Yet trembling when He shows a frown.

'Tis well, perhaps, even now to feel
 That God is near; but, O how poor
 The soul which dreads the thunder-peal,
 And shrinks the lightning's flash before,
 Yet fails His boundless love to view
 In star and sunbeam, rain and dew!

Eternal power and Godhead blaze
 In every vivid flash of lightning;
 But these as clearly greet our gaze
 In every dewdrop, morning brightening;
 And He who hung the sun on high
 Is great as He who rends the sky.

Each mighty burst of terror rolled
 Bespeaks our God the God of might;
 Each flashing sheet of vapoured gold
 Proclaims the truth, that "God is Light;"
 And soon the storm-purged sky shall glow
 With "God is Love," to all below.

When 'mid the storm our hearts can say
 "Our Father," should we not rejoice
 That He his power can thus display
 In words of fire and thunder-voice!
 The Father who such powers can wield,
 Will surely prove His children's shield.

Or, should it be His wise decree,
 That through this elemental war
 Should come from Him, to set me free,
 His message and his fiery car,
 A death more glorious I shall claim
 Than hero's on the field of fame!

Rain in the Country.

IT rains, it rains, it wrathfully rains;
 Hear how it pelts on the window panes!
 And happy they who but hear it so—
 Who thus alone can its fury know;
 But sorry there case who unsheltered bear
 Its pitiless pelt in the howling air;
 Yet, while I muse on my couch composed,
 Far better than I may be so exposed.

It rains, it rains, in mercy it rains;
 For what were the sower's utmost pains,
 And when would the field its fruit supply
 Reposing beneath a rainless sky?
 Earth's beauty then would forget to bloom,
 And life vanish in Famine's tomb;
 Then let us bless the reviving rain
 That Edenizes our earth again!

Ere earth awoke from archaic gloom
To life and light in luxuriant bloom,
Wild waters waved o'er its weltering clay,
Till on the morn of Creation's day
The Spirit moved o'er the liquid shroud,
And wrapped its folds into sea and cloud;
Then Nature, fresh from old ocean's breast,
Burst forth in Spring-time verdure drest!

And so each Spring she grows young again,
By drinking life from the nectar rain:
The child of ocean, though aged now,
Must still for her mother's blessing bow;
While she, through all her commotions wild,
Remembers aye her dependent child,
And charges the cloud's baptismal wing
To sprinkle earth with the joys of Spring!

Rain in the City.

IT rains, how it rains! Just hear how it splashes
 Those crazy old doors and decayed window-sashes!
 A deluge discharged from the windows of heaven,
 On nearing the earth into tatters is riven;
 And, wreaking its rage on the rickety flags,
 Makè streets, lanes, and closes like rivers in rags;
 While tenements, temples, and turrets unshaken,
 Like ghosts of a navy by Neptune forsaken,
 Stand dismal—dismantled, deserted, and dripping—
 A wreck of the ocean, and ruin to shipping!

It rains, how it rains! O I pity those wretches
 Who crouch through the closes like Punch-punished sketches!
 In summer, when swells tights and topcoats are loathing,
 The tatterdemalion may bless his scant clothing;
 But deluges, drenching the dying year's "*—embers,*"
 Must chill ragamuffin's whole body and members;
 Soaked through to the skin, yea farther I fear,
 What wonder he should try a "*nip*" or a "*beer*"?
 The provost and parson are both at their "*cham,*"
 Why should they deny the poor dismal his dram!

It rains, how it rains! What a day for the cabs!
 Shall we pity poor cabby in waterproof drabs?
 Not a bit, for to-day he has got, I declare,
 Ten "tips" and ten "tipples," which had it been fair
 He never had seen, so he need not complain;—
 'Tis his to make hay not in sunshine but rain.
 But making of hay is not much in his way,
 Though he likes a "fare" well when it whispers him "hae;"
 His faith is to fleece for the sake of the wool,
 And skin when he finds he is fleecing a fool.

It rains, still it rains! Why, this town of St. Mungo
 St. Swithin's should be, from Sighthill to Strathbungo.
 Six weeks without rain would make Clutha and Kelvin
 Expose their foul channels for navvies to delve in;
 While dealers in waterproof coats and umbrellas
 Would find themselves bankrupt and ruined, poor fellows.
 And who could be sorry? For none should adhere
 To a trade which, with *fairness*, no profits can clear;
 And which, to keep quit of a Court Liquidation,
 Must ever be courting the sun's Sequestration!

“With the Stars.”

“A young child was lost in the bush at Talbragar, near Denison Town, and was not discovered until after about thirty hours’ search. When the little fellow was asked where he slept on the night he was out, he answered, ‘With the stars.’”—*Sidney Herald*.

UPON the borders of the bush
 Arose a thrilling cry—
 A cry of anguish and dismay
 That woke the drowsy sky

And broke bewailing echoes o’er
 The twilight-mantled wild,
 As through the gloom a mother flew,
 Shrieking, “My child, my child.”

Her child—a boy of six years old—
 Brimful of buoyant life,
 Heroic force and fire, pent up
 For manhood’s coming strife—

A model of the manlier man
 Whose empire bushward grows,
 And must extend until those wilds
 Shall blossom as the rose!

That boy had wandered forth at noon
 Upon his father's track;
 But ne'er his father had he reached,
 Nor to his home come back.

And now, the best his friends can hope—
 A hope itself but fear,
 Is that he wanders still alone,
 Where none but God is near,

Amid the dangers of the bush,
 Which e'en the savage dreads,
 As by the stars, at midnight hour,
 His pathless course he threads.

All night they search, but search in vain:—
 Each loud, long, anxious cry
 Is answered but by echoes drear
 Which only live to die;

And all the next long day, till night
 Once more is closing round,
 When "God be praised," the father cries,
 "My precious boy is found!"

O who can sound the seas of love,
 Or gauge the gushing joy
 That overflow those parents' hearts
 When now they clasp their boy

As if from out the very grave :—
 Loved, lost, and found again?
 Such rapture is the soul of joy
 Set free by dying pain !

"Where did you sleep last night?" they ask,
 And thus the boy replies:
 "Last night my sleep was with the stars
 That smiled from yonder skies."

Brave boy! thine was a noble heart,
 A strong poetic mind,
 And thus was thy companionship
 Not to cold earth confined.

To thee the jungle's solitude
 But opened ampler space
 For thought to throw its thralls away
 And liberty embrace!

The darksome night no dreariness
 Presented to thy mind,
 For through it stars rained radiance
 Refulgent and refined!

Thy sleep was with the stars:—Ah me,
 Such fellowship is rare;
 But thou wert worthy, else hadst thou
 Ne'er felt that stars were there.

'Tis only for the mind that soars
 Toward its source Divine,
 That those bright eyes in tenderness
 Through midnight darkness shine.

They smile upon the limpid lake,
 And with the river play,
 But scorn communion with the dull
 Unsympathetic clay.

Thy sleep was with the stars, bright boy!

I see thee there recline,

And feel that stars are lustreless

Beside that mind of thine!

Their light is cold, and groweth not,

While thine must still increase

Until it shines where stars are not—

Where night and darkness cease.

And, lullabied as thou hast been

By the music of the spheres,

Hope bids us list for melody

From thee in future years!

Rowena's Wooing: A Minor Norman Conquest.

WHEN England's latest Saxon king
 -Had vaulted to the throne,
 To feel it trembling while he sat,
 As if it scorned to own

His right or fitness to succeed
 A king whose worth had made
 That throne a shrine at which the heart
 Of England homage paid;

From Norway's wild and rugged shores
 An envious murmur came,
 And o'er the sea, from Normandy,
 Was heard a bolder claim;

While well he knew that not a few
 In England's own domain
 Gave but a sullen semblance of
 Submission to his reign.

To safely guide the barque of state
 'Mid breakers such as those,
 Was not a task for feeble arm
 Nor indolent repose:

It needed more than Harold's might,
 Though heart and arm were strong,
 With all his kingcraft's subtle wiles,
 To guide the vessel long.

I.

Come, Edwin, spoke the anxious king,
 None more than Harold knows
 Thy heart's devotion to our cause—
 Thy hatred of our foes.

Ere now, thy youthful arm has won
 Rich laurels for thy brow,
 But ne'er has such occasion called
 As claims thy valour now.

Then hie thee northward, swift as horse
 Can bear thy burning heart;
 Call out thy vassals every one—
 To them thy zeal impart—

And with thy band of heroes brave
 To Stamford Bridge repair,
 For Tostig's pride and Norway's power
 I vow to humble there.

And, list thee, Edwin, when our arms
 That traitor has laid low,
 No niggard largess shall be thine—
 Thy sovereign then shall shew

How he esteems such loyal hearts,
 Such ready arms as thine,
 Rowena, England's brightest gem,
 Upon thy breast shall shine!

Our wilful ward too long hath pined
 Within thy neighbour's tower;
 She now must yield her to our will,
 Or bend beneath our power.

II.

Intent on war, intent on love,
His heart both brave and light,
He mounts his steed, he grasps the reins,
And darts into the night.

Ere morning's sun hath tipped its towers,
The courts of Ethelford
Are echoing the clash and clang
Of shield, and spear, and sword;

And willing hearts, from far and near,
Are hurrying to the call
Of Edwin, loved and honoured there
More than the king, by all.

III.

While thus his men are mustering
And marshalling in pride,
One hour their leader steals to seek
His now affianced bride.

With love, no doubt, but love arrayed
 In self-sufficient guise,
 He met Rowena, not to plead
 Acceptance in her eyes;

But, confident in royal right
 To gift the maiden's hand,
 And waiting not to woo and win—
 He speaks the king's command.

As round King Canute's throne, erewhile,
 The rebel waves advanced,
 Despite his orders to recede,
 So fiercer surges danced

Tumultuous in Rowena's breast,
 To think a king should try
 To barter what was hers alone—
 What empires could not buy!

Go, said she—with a look of scorn
 Which nowhere else can dwell
 Save on a noble woman's face,
 Her sense of wrong to tell—

Go, tell the Royal knave who dares:
 Such message me to send,
 That sooner shall Rowena's hand
 Her earthly being end

Than yield itself to aught so vile
 As one who would not scorn
 To wed a bride from home and friends
 By tyrant's mandate torn;

Go tell him, caitiff, that while life
 Supports Rowena's pride,
 No king on earth shall make of her
 A basely bartered bride:

No—my own heart must first be heard,
 And then my father's voice;
 Whom these command shall have my hand—
 I scorn all other choice.

IV.

Though sorely wounded, Edwin's pride
Refused to shew his pain,
So answered he, right haughtily,
Proud lady, think again.

Remember that thy exiled sire
O'er thee has no command;
The King alone, by Saxon law,
Can now dispose thy hand.

And, by my sword and spear, I swear,
Since so the king hath said,
When victors from the field we come
The caitiff thou shalt wed!

V.

At Stamford Bridge the Saxon host
Their warlike name maintained,
And in a hard-fought fight at last
A glorious victory gained;

But first among the heroes there,
Whose deeds are known in song,
Was Edwin, bravest of the brave,
And strongest of the strong;

His savage sword, of all the swords
That there wrought fame and woe,
Drank deepest of the crimson tide—
Laid most proud foemen low.

King Harold watched with stern delight
The wonders thus performed,
And, 'neath his sword, by blow and word,
The warlike Thane transformed

To Earl of Alderwood, and vowed
That thither he should ride,
So soon as victory was won,
To dower him with his bride.

VI.

The fight is o'er, and Alderwood
Is thronged with warriors bold,
Assembled there around the King,
A victor-feast to hold;

The King, elate, from chair of State
Declares his Royal will--
Let each true-hearted guest, he says,
Brimful his wine-cup fill

To toast our ward, Rowena fair,
Now the affianced bride
Of Edwin, Earl of Alderwood--
Of warriors brave the pride!

So speaks the Monarch, but, what now--
Why no responsive shout?
Why this suspicious lull--those looks
Of questioning or doubt?

What meaneth this! exclaims the king—
 Who dares dispute our power
 To wed our ward to one whose deeds
 Deserve far richer dower!

By Saxon law I have the right,
 And here, by Heaven I swear,
 That right I shall not yield while I
 The Royal sceptre bear.

VII.

A feeble cheer gave faint response
 To Harold's haughty speech;
 While through the hall a murmur rolled
 Like waves along the beach,

Then broke like sudden thunder-peal
 In bold defiant tone—
 I, Harold, I deny thy right,
 Even while you hold the throne;

I still am Earl of Alderwood
 And 'mid my vassals, I
 Claim now my lands, my daughter too,
 And all thy power defy

To wrest them from me; for, before
 Such forfeiture is made,
 A legal trial I must stand,
 And that must be delayed—

Delayed until more doubtful claims
 To higher rank than mine
 Have first been settled by the sword—
 Whose?—you may well divine.

VIII.

A hearty cheer woke echoes then
 Which many years had slept,
 Unroused since last within that hall
 The Earl had wassail kept,

As, "Welcome, Earl of Alderwood!"

With many a lusty cheer
Rang through the hall, and smote with pain
Th' astonished Harold's ear.

Rowena in her chamber heard
The joyous shouts resound,
And, like a rescued prisoner
From galling chains unbound,

With flashing eyes, and flowing locks,—
All heedless of her charms,—
She bounded through the crowded hall
Into her father's arms.

"Seize him, seize her," cried Harold then,
In rage that would not hide,—
"An exiled traitor shall not keep
Brave Edwin from his bride."

Rushed Edwin then upon the Earl
In fierce and fiery wrath :—
Yea, on the father of his bride,
To clear him from his path,

And, face to face, their swords unsheathed,
Two Earls of Alderwood
Prepared for combat; when, between,
A stranger forward stood—

Nay, hold thy hand, proud Edwin, now—
Nor venture mortal strife
With him whose daughter thou wouldst fain
Compel to be thy wife,

I claim the right to raise my sword
In her defence whose hand
Her father granted me ere yet
He left his native land,

And by the God who reigns above,
I swear to have my bride;
So yield thy claim at once, or draw,
And let our swords decide.

IX.

Thus spake a Norman Knight in tones
Which love and truth made strong,
While Edwin, but by passion ruled,
Cared nought for right or wrong;

He only felt that his strong arm,
Which vanquished Norway's pride,
Could surely never fail him now
When fighting for a bride;

So, quick as thought, or lightning flash,
And scorning further words,
They drew, and fair Rowena's fate
Hung trembling on their swords.

X.

It was a fearful fight, I ween,
As ever heroes fought;
Their hearts were brave, their swords were keen,
The prize unpriced by thought:

The lady, in her father's arms,
 Trembled, and hoped, and feared;
 While Harold, on his chair of State,
 Less anxious scarce appeared;

For well he saw his warrior bold
 Had met his equal now,
 And dreaded lest a Saxon Earl
 To Norman Knight should bow.

Perhaps, too, as he watched the fight
 Some phantom thought arose—
 A grim foreshadowing of fate—
 That as should be its close

Might end another, greater war
 Which then began to lower,
 With aspect threatening to his throne,
 'Twixt his and Norman power.

If so, no wonder that he wept
 When at his feet was laid
 The valiant Edwin, heedless now
 Of monarch or of maid.

XI.

He wept—'twas but a passing tear ;
He had no time to weep,
For word had come that William's fleet
Had safely crossed the deep,

And landed on the Sussex shore
A mighty warrior band,
Determined England's wealth and power
To wrest from Saxon's hand.

To meet and vanquish these was now
King Harold's burning aim,
So, turning to the Knight, he said,
Brave Norman, now thy claim

To wed Rowena thou hast well
Established by thy sword,
But, were it not that I can prize
Such valour, and afford

To be more generous than thou,
 My prisoner thou shouldst be
 Until my arms thy Duke's proud host
 Had hurled into the sea:

But go in peace,—my message bear
 To that presumptuous lord,—
 Tell him I have no wish again
 So soon to flesh my sword;

Tell him to quit these shores, and cease
 O'er such wild schemes to brood;—
 'Twere better far that he and I
 Should seek each other's good;

Such friendship I desire to show,
 And now, should he retire,
 I care not though a handsome gift
 Should help to soothe his ire;

But if he dare to linger there
 Beyond a second day,
 He and his band shall understand
 The fate of proud Norway.

XII.

Undauntedly the Knight replied,
I claim my bride by right—
Mine by her own—her father's choice—
Mine by my right hand's might :

With her I'll go, and safely bear
Thy message to my King
But think not I, nor one of his,
Acceptance back shall bring.

The Norman is no perjured Dane
To pocket paltry bribes ;
The peace he swears is only that
His own good sword inscribes.

XIII.

How Harold's message was received,
How Hastings field was fought,
'Tis needless here to sing—the tale
Our children know by rote ;

Enough, when William gained the crown,
 And England had become
 A larger Normandy, therein
 There was no happier home

Than Alderwood, whose acres broad,—
 Rowena's own by right,—
 Were nought to what her husband gained
 By valour in the fight;

Lands still retained by sons of theirs,
 Who tell with English pride
 How fearless Frank de Beaumont wooed
 And won his Saxon bride:

A nobler wooing than befalls
 Full many a maiden now,
 By fashion to the altar led
 To rank or wealth to bow,

In base burlesque of holy rites
 Which only should be given
 To hearts already knit by love,—
 The nuptial tie of heaven.

To My Pen.

 PRECIOUS pen! too long my muse
 Has failed to feel her obligation
 To thee, and must no more refuse
 To bring the debt to liquidation:
 A debt which cannot yet be paid
 Without thine own unselfish aid!

When far apart in distant lands
 My friends and I feel isolation,
 Then thou art ready at our hands
 To put us in communication,
 And from thy point our friendship flows
 To every point the compass knows.

When love is leaping in my heart
 And cannot, will not, bear repression,
 O then what rapture to impart
 By thee the glowing soul's expression!
 When so engaged even thou must feel
 Love penetrate thy heart of steel!

When thought with thought, as friend with friend,
 Commune in silent meditation,
 Evolving other thoughts which tend
 To vanish by evaporation,
 'Tis thine to seize the fleeting shade
 And fix it where it may not fade.

Then when I wed my thoughts with rhyme,
 But rhymes are coy and hard to marry,
 And I must try time after time
 Before my verse my song will carry,
 By thee I form, reform, revise,
 Till rhyme and reason harmonize.

And, last not least, when Beauty smiles

On gaping album, while she whispers

This page is silent, can your wiles

Engage it with the other lispers?

What were my fate my priceless pen

Were thou not there to say "Amen."?

My fingers yield a kind embrace

And find from thee reciprocation;

While on the virgin page I trace

My first and foremost inspiration,

And having done this penance sore

I feel my virtue running o'er.

Thou mighty minister of mind—

Mouth-piece of immaterial being—

Thy mission means to make mankind

All-wise, all-hearing, and all-seeing;

By thee long silent sages preach

And distant lands speak each with each.

What had we been had not the quill
 Made pennate human aspiration?
The world had been a cradle still
 And we but babes in education;
Now, soaring far from such a state,
We find ourselves penultimate!

Changes.

O tempora, O mores!

THE times are changed since I was young—
 Sometimes we then had Spring,
 But now, untuneful and unsung,
 She sleeps 'neath Winter's wing:
 Snow melts reluctantly in May,
 And hail hails in the longest day.

The world is changed since I was born—
 We then had boys and girls,
 But now our boys are men, and scorn
 Their "governors" as churls;
 While girls, like Spring, have disappeared
 And *ladies* are from *babies* reared!

Baby Born.

A NIGHT of suffering and pain
 Has passed away, and now the morn
 Is bright with joy, for there is born
 A child, which makes the suffering gain.

The mother, full of love and pride,
 Luxuriates in calm repose ;
 While, dreamless yet of joys or woes,
 Her baby slumbers by her side ;

And, half afraid he stays too long,
 Yet love-impelled to linger there,
 The father bends him o'er the pair
 And out of weakness is made strong !

Strong in life's battle now to dare
 And do more than he yet has done ;
 Not for himself but for his son ;—
 Strong every trial now to bear.

Bright bud of promise! just begun
 To spread thy petals to the light:—
 Sprung Godward from archaic night
 To fructify beneath the sun!

But what the fruit? Ah, well, 'tis vain
 To seek the future to foreknow;
 We may not, and 'tis better so,
 Else Hope were dead and effort slain.

Auspicious Hope—Life's radiant star—
 The noon needs not thy blissful ray:
 We seek thee not while shines the day:
 'Tis darkness lights thee from afar.

Then, Welcome baby to my breast,
 With all thy confluence of care
 To deepen faith—dispel despair,
 And brighten Hope's presage of rest!

A Nursery Notion.

FAIR blossom of being, thy Spring just begun,
 Entranced I contemplate the problem you hold;
 The apex to which generations have run,
 The base whence perchance many more may unfold.

Back through the dim vista of care-crowded years
 I gaze till obscurity closes my view,
 And there, 'mid the haze, to my fancy appears
 A waif with a wavering resemblance of you.

And some subtle nerve in the sanctum of sight
 Is touched with the likeness, and signs to my soul—
 That is you as you fell from primordial night
 And started the race of which death is the goal.

Ah me, while an ocean of turbulent thought
 Surges over the hollow between now and then,
 I murmur—could full retrocession be bought,
 No price were too much for my childhood again.

O could it be granted that I—the true me—
 The essence within this existence that shews,
 With all I have learned, could now but, to be
 Begin like to-day when the morning arose;

My past but a yesterday leaving behind
 Its wisdom to wait on the wants of to-day;
 Ah, then should my evening tranquillity find
 And life pass with sun-setting glory away.

Vain thought! the Eternal Himself cannot give
 Such boon to ephemeral creatures of clay;
 But this he may grant me, henceforward to live
 In hope of new life—new and glorious day!

For what is our death so much dreaded but birth
 Into loftier, lovelier life than we know;
 Where Spirit set free from the fetters of earth
 Its power to progress shall triumphantly shew!

The City Sabbath.

THIS summer morn, and now the king of day
 With growing strength some hours has held his throne;
 The city basks beneath his glowing ray,
 But fails as yet his quick'ning power to own.
 The hours have come for business to be pressed,
 Yet these erst busy streets I tread alone—
 As if 'twere midnight still. 'Tis midnight morning-dressed!

And why the change? Ah, there is reason strong!
 Among the days one blessèd day has dawned—
 A day which, thanks to Heaven, does not belong
 To toil or toil's taskmakers, but is owned
 By man as man, for whom the day was made;
 And blessed again by Him whose death atoned
 For sin, that lost us rest, and labour on us laid.

On such a holy morn it suits my taste,
 And quarrels not with aught I understand
 Implied in Heaven's benevolent bequest,
 To leave the city for an hour, and stand
 Where unto me it seems I'm nearer Heaven—
 'Mong rural scenes, where Nature holds command,
 And shews me as they came the gifts her God hath given.

Amid such scenes, and having filled my soul
 From their o'erflowing beauty, I have gazed
 Upon the city from some rising knoll,
 As on my father, when he calmly raised
 His toil-soiled hand, and Heaven's best blessings sought
 On daily meals, for which we should have praised
 Both him and Heaven, had we been grateful as we ought.

From labour now the citizens have ceased;
 And not for rest alone, but higher need,
 That in their Father's house their souls may feast
 On all the words that from His mouth proceed;
 And every skyward-pointing spire and tower
 Seems as a hand outstretched with Heaven to plead
 That blessings manifold may on those feasters shower.

Amen, my soul responds, as I retrace
 My steps to town, to mingle with the throng
 Who now prepare to seek the sacred place
 Where God is worshippèd in prayer and song;
 A mighty multitude of human hearts,
 Like atoms by a hidden magnet strong
 Attracted to the centre whence their being starts.

A hundred bells peal forth the call to prayer;
 A hundred temples wide their portals fling;
 A hundred thousand worshippers repair
 To worship Him whose praises angels sing:
 And seems it not as if the angels might
 Descend to earth on sympathising wing
 Those worshippers to aid in praising God aright.

Some fools there are, who scorn such grave pursuits;
 Who have no heart for praise—who will not pray;
 Who, choosing vile equality with brutes,
 Own not a God, nor heed his sacred day.
 Yet is there aught that noblest minds can try
 So much ennobling as to humbly lay
 Their powers expectant at the feet of Deity!

I love at times to wend my peaceful way
 Through rural lanes to one sequestered scene
 Where, 'mid the tombs of ages old and gray,
 There stands a humble church where oft convene
 With humble hearts, in humble peasant guise,
 A few as earnest worshippers I ween
 As e'er from city sent an anthem to the skies.

Grand is such worship! Yet, 'tis more sublime
 When city crowds meet with the high intent
 To rise beyond the things of earth and time,
 And pour their hearts, in earnest worship blent,
 Before the gracious throne of Him to whom
 Must every knee in heaven and earth be bent
 Either now in worship, or ere long for final doom.

And grander still by far, and pregnant more
 With richest blessings would such worship prove,
 Did every heart, thus seeming to adore
 The living God of perfect truth and love
 In spirit and in truth, and all as one,
 Waft their united prayers of faith above:
 Then heaven with joy were filled, and earth with grace o'errun.

Their Head divine, in whose all potent name
 The Church is taught to pray, has told them that
 Where two or three agree in aught they claim
 Through Him, it shall be granted them; then what
 Should be the power of prayer, did all agree
 In faith and love, and so united at
 The throne of grace, implore in true sincerity?

Alas! as yet, the demon Discord dwells
 Among our churches! Yet, what time they come
 Most near to harmony must be when swells
 Their hearts in prayer; then they forget to roam
 The fields of petty warfare, and are drawn
 Towards their common centre—the great home
 Of pure and perfect truth, whence union yet shall dawn.

Then let us hope that each successive prayer
 That penetrates the heavens may waft below
 In blissful breathings—calm celestial air,
 Until the churches atmosphere shall grow
 Too pure and fragrant for discord to live
 Within her bounds:—Ah, then the world shall know
 The power of truth divine, and homage to it give!

Nature Sabbatic.

THIS sacred sunny summer morn
 All nature smiles Sabbatic peace;
 The sea—a glass whereon is borne,
 Its placid bosom to adorn,
 The reflex of celestial fleece.

The Sabbath bell in solemn tone—
 Yet gladsome—pealed the Gospel call
 To all God's worshippers to own
 Allegiance to His sovereign throne,
 And at His footstool humbly fall.

With pleasèd ear I heard the sound,
 And thought myself to hasten there;
 But ere God's house I reached, I found
 That all around was holy ground,
 And Godhead filling earth and air.

I passed the temple built by hands,
 And climbed the hill—an altar stair—
 Whereon my spirit understands,
 And feels, and gives, what God demands—
 Sincere and heartfelt praise and prayer.

Such praiseful prayers were never read
 As earth presents to summer skies;
 Such prayerful praise was never played
 Within Cathedral's vaulted shade,
 Where song is oft but sin's disguise.

Devotion swathes me all around,
 And binds me to the Mind Supreme
 Who formed and fertilized the ground,
 And vitalized yon glowing round
 Which radiates this rapture dream.

O God, in scenes like this I feel
 Thy boundless claims to be adored;
 Thy wondrous works Thy ways reveal,
 While through my inmost being steal
 Devoutest thoughts of thee, O Lord.

I love to join in praise and prayer
 With those Thy sacred courts who throng;
 Yet oft I cannot worship there,
 As here, while robed in rapture's air,
 Creation breathes its soul in song.

O help me, Lord, thus to adore
 And praise Thy name each day I live;
 While loving nature more and more,
 To love Thee better than before—
 And fuller, truer, service give.

And when I quit this clinging clay
 Which now obscures my spirit's sight,
 May I those long-loved scenes survey
 To find a far more full display
 Of goodness, glory, and delight.

Knowledge the Mother of Devotion.

“ Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell.”—TENNYSON.

REAT God! we feel Thy greatness more and more
 As we ourselves grow greater, and extend
 Our knowledge into realms unknown before,
 And more of Thy creation comprehend.

Our early fathers bowed bewildered heads
 In face of wonders which to us are plain,
 Illumed by light advancing science sheds,
 Yet we, like them, must feel our science vain.

For from the higher ground whereon we stand
 We scan a vastly more extended zone
 Of unexplored and more mysterious land,
 And ocean, fathomless by lines we own.

Thus we perceive that, conquer all we can,
 From utmost conquests we must gaze abroad
 On far horizons hued with haze to man,
 But all well known to his omniscient God.

Yet still we would advance, and wiser grow
 By careful study of Thy works and ways;
 The more we learn, the more would wish to know;
 And knowing more, feel more inspired to praise.

And yet, O God, how little we can know,
 When measured, not by puny human mind,
 But by the wisdom which Thy wonders shew,
 Or by the vast unknown we leave behind!

Like children on the sunny sandy shore
 Where weary wavelets weave themselves away,
 We catch but ripples of the robust roar
 Which rolls to heaven where storm and tempest play.

Profound as we may think our fathomed deeps,
 They are but shallows on the tide-left strand;
 Spray-drops from off the ocean vast which sleeps
 Hid in the hollow of Thy mighty hand!

Friendship's Frailty.

* **I**S hard to bear the loss of friends,
 Even when by death the blank is made,
 But harder still when friendship ends
 Where most we need true friendship's aid:
 When fortune frowns and flooding care
 O'erwhelms the soul in dark despair.

Ah, yes, when at the final bourne
 Our friends, still friendly, breathe adieu,
 We feel, although their loss we mourn,
 That still to us their hearts are true—
 And love and hope's expansive powers
 Can grasp them still and hold them ours!

But when amid misfortune's gloom
 Friends break the ties we thought had bound us,
 More dismal shadows fill their room
 Than death could ever cast around us:
 Then less we mourn our hearts bereaved
 Than grieve to find our love deceived.

O fondly loved one! whom I thought
Loving as lovely, kind, and true—
Whose love alone my heart had sought
To cheer a gloom of darkest hue,
How could you quench the only ray
That broke the darkness of my day?

I feel it cruel, and perchance
My pangs may please some perverse heart,
But it were madness could my glance
Behold you smiling on my smart;
For fondly I regard thee still,
And cannot think you meant me ill.

An Memoriam.—C. D.

The author's Brother, drowned along with a companion,
at Aberdeen, 21st August, 1865.

I.—1865.

THE sun in growing brightness nearing noon
Gave promise of a rich and glorious day;
The bursting blossoms silvered every spray,
And Hope already grasped the grateful boon
Of rich ripe fruit, which seemed so certain soon
To bless expectant hearts, and charm away
The memory of doubts and fears that lay
In Springtime's anxious breast, as in the moon
Frown doubtful shadows when she fairest shines.
Alas! alas! a dread eclipse transforms
The day to night; and expectation pines
O'er blasted blossoms 'mid the wintry storms
Of bitter grief; for he, the loved of all,
In promise of his youth is gone beyond recall.

II.—1880.

Yes, "gone beyond recall,"—nor wish have I,
Now that these years have passed, to bring him back,
For doubtless he since then has kept the track
Of progress then begun, and now can fly
Where then he crept; and in the purer sky
Sees farther, and to loftier aims devotes
His energies than to the monad motes
Which here on earth engross the carnal eye:
Yet though beyond recall, he may come near,
And with new life my fainting heart inspire;
Bring light in darkness—faith and hope for fear—
Direct and aid my spirit to aspire,
Until, surmounting all that hinders here,
I reach at length his soaring spirit-sphere!

An Memoriam.—W. J. H. D.

DIED 12TH MARCH, 1868. .

I.—1868.

AH me! ah me! What was I thinking?
 That he was here? Ah no; no, no.
 Did we not watch him suffering, sinking,
 Till life's spent tide had ceased to flow,
 And from his soul-bright face had fled
 All but the beauty of the dead?

Ah yes! no more his radiant smile
 Shall scatter sunshine round our hearth;
 Nor merry laugh nor words beguile
 Our cares, and charm our souls to mirth;
 Yet, deathless in our souls shall dwell
 The fair bright boy we loved so well.

Our love would fain have kept him here,
 And vainly strove to stay the hand
 That drew him to a happier sphere,
 To join the joyous seraph band;
 But longer, stronger love than ours
 Claimed him for Eden's blissful bowers.

And now, though some sad tears will dim
 Our view of his unmingled joy,
 We seek to yield all praise to Him
 Who so has loved and blessed our boy;
 And Who, by taking him, has given
 Our home a family tie with heaven.

II.—1880.

Ah yes, I felt his loss distressing,
 And could not then rejoice to tell
 That he had left my fond caressing
 Within "Our Father's" home to dwell;
 Now, wiser grown, I mourn no more,
 But feel it well he went before.

For he, in realms serenely blissful,
 His mother waited to receive
 When she, though quitting scenes distressful,
 Felt loath her loved ones there to leave:
 She left her children here in sadness
 To join her griefless son in gladness!

When my fair child from me was taken
 My heart, bereaved, in sorrow pined,
 But now I feel far less forsaken
 By him than by those left behind:
 He still to me a *child* is known,
 While they have childish ways outgrown.

Now, crystallized in love unfading,
 His infant image must remain;
 While nought of his the vision shading,
 Can ever cause me future pain:
 Until we meet, my sprightly boy
 Remains my fondest family joy!

Sonnets on a Sunny Son.

I.—1868.

IT cannot be—'tis my fond heart deceiving
 Would make-believe that he is romping here—
 The mirthful boy gone to a brighter sphere,
 For whom we should not, yet must needs be grieving.
 He was our joy—a radiant gem—relieving
 The darkness of our days, when care and fear
 Made life the gloomy vestibule appear
 Of Momus' temple. His rich laugh and smile
 And buoyant gladness, made 'us almost feel
 Like him, and laugh at trouble for the while.
 But soon—Alas! too soon, Death set his seal
 Upon those beaming eyes and brain-full brow;
 And he is gone to realms where joy is real,
 Not to return to us—but we to him shall go!

II.—1880.

Long gone! Yet still to me what they are not
 Who stay behind; for they in years have grown
 Apart from me to entities their own;
 And, contemplating what they are, I wot
 What once they were is buried and forgot.
 But thou art childhood crystallized—now known
 And to be known by me as *child* alone
 Until we meet; when thou shalt be revealed—
 First, as a child, I trust that I may know
 The loved one long from longing eyes concealed;
 But, recognized, then thou thyself wilt shew
 As thou hast grown, while I in rapture glow!
 Yet while eternal life and love flow on
 My heart shall cherish still the childhood of my son.

III.

Thus shall I have in thee two sons in one—
 The child I lost, the son regained on high—
 The same, yet vastly different; while my eye,
 Uncheated by the slow gradations run
 On earth, by which development is won
 From child to man, shall oft unconsciously
 View each apart; and, while I glorify

Earth's treasured childhood, gladly recognize
Supernal growth, and watch its rich increase
In thee and me: an ever-gaining prize,
Whose growing worth and wonder ne'er shall cease,
But adding merit, pleasure, joy, and peace,
Shall ever brighter and more brightly shine
In light that flows from and attracts to light divine!

Sight-Seeking Sonnets: An Memoriam.

I.

I SAT before a mirror, and beheld
 What seemed myself, and to that self I said—
 Could'st thou but see and read as I have read
 This self, and be as much impelled
 To study me as I now study thee,
 And could we both our thoughts together weld,
 It would, beyond all doubt, be unto me
 A vast accession of the vast "to be."
 For then should you and I most fully sympathize,
 And each the other fairly scrutinize,
 When you could tell me just exactly what I am:—
 The fact I most intensely long to know:—
 To know what truth I hold—what real—what show;
 How much God may approve—how much condemn?

II.

I turned me round and faced another scene—
 Another self—one who was me and more;
 More to me then than she had been before,
 Because one claimed her then whose claim, I ween,
 Could I have challenged, she should not have been
 The tyrant's victim, captured from the shore
 To which he never will his prize restore.
 But even then his fatal power was seen;
 And thus as in a mirror I beheld
 What I have yet to be, and what to bear,
 Ere I can fully see myself, and know
 As I am known, when, finally unveiled,
 Eternal light shall glisten, yet not glare,
 And mind shall feel itself with light aglow!

III.

And is it really so, that I must pass
 Through such drear darkness ere my soul can reach
 The truth which one might think our God could teach
 Even now unto His humble junior class?
 It seems so; and although it does surpass
 My comprehension, I shall not impeach
 His wisdom who gives wisdom, but beseech

His mercy not in vain to embarrass

My soul with quests, whereon my soul's request,

Though e'er so anxious, may not now be given.

But give me rest, O God, whereon alone

My spirit's instinct whispers there is rest;

Till perfect peace is reached around Thy throne,

And quests bear flower and fruit in harvest heaven.

IV.

Yet I would fain, even now, know somewhat more

Than yet I know, or can myself discover;

So unto Thee, my Father, friend, and lover,

I come, and kneeling, needfully implore—

While I Thy wisdom and thy power adore—

That Thou in kindness would'st thy ways uncover.

O be not, as Thou hast been, hope in store;

A treasure-house with locked and keyless door,

But present help—an open dwelling-place—

A place of refuge, and a place of strength,

Where thine—where I—may certainly find rest

In every case of dire and dread distress:

Where, failing all, I may secure at length

All that can make my craving nature blest.

V.

In silent watches of the slumb'rous night,
 And time by time throughout the surging day,
 Our loved ones, whom we mourn as far away,
 May hover round us, though our grosser sight
 Fails to perceive those whom we long to see.
 Yet oft-times, both in darkness and in light,
 A thrill awakes our senses, as if we
 Were near them, and would yet desire to be
 Still nearer, and to eye their eyes with ours,
 Drinking the joyance of communing hours.
 And must not such sensations needs arise
 When soul and spirit meet and recognise
 Through intervening clay, which only feels
 A tremor of the truth such contact seals?

VI.

If we believe those viewless spirits throng
 Around us and encompass all our ways,
 Should not this make all our nights and days
 More filled with virtue, and more free from wrong?
 From nought we do can we exclude their gaze:

Unseen, but seeing, they serenely glide

Alike into our scenes of prayer and praise,
And haunts of hell where some may slink aside

To work their wicked will—their own disgrace.
How then can we beneath their purer eyes

Do aught we would not dare before the face
Of kindred virtue?—So let all pursue
Conduct the purest may be pleased to view.

VII.

Yet is it not a sweetly pleasing thought—

That they should thus attend us night and noon!

By purest souls could any higher boon,
Save God's own gracious guidance, e'er be sought?
Keep near me, loved ones—loved one—till I swoon,
And swooning meet thee in thy new domain,
There reunited ne'er to part again.

Keep near, and let me know that thou art near—

No haunting ghost, but helpful guard and guide:
Thus shall I greet thee with no shade of fear,
Yea, even shouldst thou (as may it yet betide)
Display thy being and thy presence here.

Keep near, and I thy care shall recompense
By striving upward until called hence.

Consolation.

WHEN the summer sun is sinking
 We may grieve the day is done,
 Yet we soothe our grief by thinking
 There will rise another sun;
 While till then, through restful night,
 We may wait the morning light.

So, when well-spent life is ending,
 We may mourn the sunshine o'er,
 Yet we know sunset is sending
 Sunrise sure to set no more:
 Thus while weepers wail in woe
 Faith and Hope make morning glow.

A Dream of Life.

I SLEPT, but sleep supplied repose
 To sense alone—not brain nor heart;
 I had but waived my waking woes
 To dare in dreams their counterpart.

I dreamt that I, while morn was gay,
 Went forth to breathe its balmy air:—
 The glow gave place to gloom, and day
 Was darkness, gleamed with lightning's glare.

I met a youth whose sunny smile
 And fond embrace my spirit warmed;
 But soon the smile displayed its guile,
 And friendship fled, by frowns alarmed.

I stooped beside a crystal brook
 To drink, and bathe my burning brow:—
 The crystal sheen the stream forsook,
 And fever-fraught became the flow.

Ripe, luscious fruit hung all around,
 As if to soothe my soul's disgust:
 I gladly plucked, but sadly found
 The grapes were ashes—apples dust.

A sprightly band of wood-nymphs fair
 Allured me with resistless charms;
 I followed far, but found despair,
 With fiends to fold me in their arms.

I reached a cross in woodland green,
 And bent me there to humbly pray,
 But mind forsook the sacred scene
 And wildly wandered wide away.

A hoary sage, who seemed to grieve,
 Spoke kind-like words of calm reproof:
 I bowed, his blessing to receive,
 And thus observed the cloven hoof.

I fled, nor paused while strength remained—
 Fled far in horror, doubt, and fear,
 Until a desert land I gained
 Where fiend, nor man, nor God was near.

Alone—exhausted—in the gloom,
 On sullen rock myself I threw,
 And passionately prayed for room
 To leave myself and live anew.

“No space,” the wailing wind exclaimed;
 “No space,” the desert drear replied;
 “No space for life to be reclaimed:—
 No space,” by dying day was sighed.

Outcast from man, from God, from all;
 With vastly quickened soul and sense,
 I never felt myself so small,
 Yet ne’er had feeling so intense.

Not one of many now, but one—
 And only one, I—I alone
 Must now be ransomed or undone,
 As if no other soul were known.

A puny atom in the wide
 Wild waste; yet there the only Mind!
 Should I be proud? Ah, how could pride
 In such despair existence find?

Yes, I had mind—a mind me thought
 Whose upward cravings proved it kin
 To highest MIND—and therefore ought
 To be emancipate from sin!

And if from sin, from sorrow? Yes,
 Or then should I have strength to bear,
 While sorrow would result in bliss,
 And Faith set free from future fear.

Then, though alone, not lost.—I stood
 And raised confiding eyes to Heaven;
 Thence heard the message, “I am Good,
 And I to thee am freely given.”

Warm light awoke the desert air,
 Unfolding now a summer scene
 Of blooming verdure, rich and fair
 As Adam's Eden may have been.

While all the rock whereon I lay
 Grew soft and green with sunny moss;
 And, hallowing the heart of day,
 I fondly viewed a vine-wreathed cross!

I woke—awoke from dreams to day;
 Awoke, all vain pursuits to spurn;
 Awoke to give myself away
 To God, and get Him in return!

A Dream of Death.

WHILE Death's twin sister—Life's handmaid—
 Had wound me in her welcome arms,
 My restless spirit spurned her aid
 And hied me thence for wilder charms

Through countless scenes of bygone days,
 And scenes unseen, unknown before;
 Through mist and cloud and sunny rays,
 By sea and land, and foreign shore.

Forgotten scenes of youthful years
 Appeared in freshness of their prime,
 In sunshine bathed, bedewed with tears:
 Past with the present wreathing rhyme!

But, fading these, the recent past
 Filled up my vision-field of view,
 And led me onward to my last
 Farewell to earth—to friends' adieu.

The turmoils of the toilsome day,
 Its ever mingling hopes and fears,
 In crowding chaos thronged my way—
 Enough at once for lifetime's years.

I struggled on—or rather I
 Was borne bewildered through the maze,
 Till gloom obscured the onward sky
 With night enough for lifetime's days.

Appalling stillness from the dark
 Hushed and dispersed the ghosts of strife,
 While I was left alone, to hark
 And stare for sight or sound of life.

O, awful silence, awful gloom!
 It seemed as if this woful earth
 Became Despair's developed womb,
 And I the babe awaiting birth.

All senses gone, save sense alone
 That I existed—consciousness
 Of life within a rayless zone
 Of darkness, death, or nothingness.

At length, from out the dark profound
 A ghastly glimmer seemed light,
 And motionless, without a sound,
 A frightful phantom faced my sight;

The ghost of that fantastic shape
 Of dead dry bones which fear has framed
 To image death, and grimly ape
 The king of terrors—wrongly named:

Yes, wrongly named, for I surveyed
 The phantom fearlessly, and bore
 Its threat of terror undismayed,
 Assured my triumph lay before.

The light assumed a fuller ray,
 In which the spectre's shrinking size
 Looked somewhat more akin to day—
 Less yawning mouth, less hollow eyes.

It seemed as if its horror, hued
 By gloom, and only half disclosed,
 Should vanish when more closely viewed,
 In truth-revealing light exposed.

Within the vista, through the gloom,
 Methought my eye could faintly trace
 A ravished or deserted tomb,
 Whence issued warm illuming rays,

Which, falling on the spectral shade,
 Made all its loathsome outlines melt,
 Its grinning ghastliness to fade
 Behind a form where Spirit dwelt.

Dark shadows fled as from the dawn,
 While softer lines and comely grace
 Around the skeleton were drawn,
 And beauty beamed in form and face.

Those resurrection rays—grave born—
 Brighter and yet more brightly shone,
 Till robes celestial were worn
 By that which erst was shroudless bone;

While amaranth and myrtle twined
A brow of alabaster pure,
Whence toward me fond eyes inclined,
With radiant smiles my soul to lure!

And through the heaven-illuminated tomb
Angelic Death showed me the way
To quit this sphere of twilight gloom,
And enter realms of radiant day!

Such was my dream, and may my dream
Be realized when comes the time
To tread the valley, cross the stream
Dividing Earth from Eden's clime.

To Death.

GREAT Death! thy mighty power I own,
 Thy universal sway,
 Yet will not, cannot, dare not, crown
 Thee "King of terrors," for thy frown
 To me brings no dismay.

Thou canst but level with the ground
 This prison cell of earth
 In which my spirit now is bound,
 Impatient till release is found
 To reach a higher birth.

So, not in terror, but delight,
 I wait thy friendly stroke
 To give me liberty for flight,
 To join companions in the light,
 Who know no carnal yoke.

And if till then, as I desire,
 I strive in duty here,
 While heavenward heart and soul aspire,
 I know when days below expire
 I have not thee to fear.

For then shalt thou in kindly guise
 All ghastliness conceal,
 And closing these, ope other eyes,
 To suit the light of brighter skies
 Which nobler aims reveal.

And thus, death-ushered to a sphere
 Of fuller life than this,
 I'll think of living, dying here,
 As only steps that brought me near
 To royal realms of bliss.

While from the height I then attain
 Another still shall rise,
 Which gaining, still another plane
 Shall lure me onward, till I reign
 With princes of the skies!

Thus sateless souls shall evermore
Find Soul's supreme employ;
Their present full of bliss—before,
An ever overflowing store—
To climb their highest joy!

Resurrection.

AND shall it never, never be
 That yon cold grave shall yield its charge?
 No; never, never shall we see
 Its occupants again at large;
 When we consign our "dust to dust,"
 'Tis no "conveyance upon trust."

Then, shall our friends, whose mortal clay
 Lies hidden 'neath the grave-yard sod,
 Not meet us in the realms of day,
 Nor visit where before they trod?
 They shall, they do, but not with those
Remains to which earth gives repose.

The Resurrection man attains

Is not from earthly grave or tomb,
 But from the death which holds its chains
 Around us from our mother's womb:—
 To *rise* is to be born afresh
 Of SPIRIT, not of blood and flesh.

If "in the spirit" now we live

And walk, and keep the body under,
 Death to our life shall surely give
 New scope; and every fetter sunder
 That binds us to our clogging clay,
 And cast the cumbrous cloak away!

Yet those the spirit loved before

Shall after death be cherished still,
 Not with affection less, but more—
 And greater freedom, power, and will
 To shew its love, and aid desire
 Of kindred spirits to aspire.

Thus we, while striving here below,
 With eyes intent on spirit land,
 May confidently hope to know
 Their presence and their helping hand;
 While soon we'll pass from cloudy time
 To join them in their sunny clime.

Emancipated thus, how could
 The spirit wish again to be
 Clothed in its carnal cloak and hood,—
 Since then *debris* of earth or sea?
 Why should by spirits be resumed
 What vilest vermin have consumed!

Yet, somehow, from the final flame
 In which dissolving earth shall glow
 May be evolved a spirit-frame,
 Even as sometimes a spirit now
 Can gather from surrounding air
 A body like to that we wear.

Till then "the whole creation groans
 And travails" for the coming birth,
 When all of worth that spirit owns
 Shall be redeemed, and purged of earth;
 And thus shall earth, through present pain,
 A spirit-birth itself attain!

Ministering Spirits.

AND can it be, as some have said,
 That those we love and mourn as dead
 Are really not so far away—
 So distant from us—but they may
 Revisit us, and guard and guide
 Our steps, while we on earth abide?
 That they, while we are plodding here,
 Roam spirit-realms which lie so near
 That we are in them, though our eyes
 May not our neighbours recognize;
 Because in that ethereal clime
 We stand like trees in winter time,

Insensate to the joy that breathes
 Around us, waiting till the wreathes
 Of winter fade before the breath
 Of Spring, when we shall vanquish death,
 And wake our wondering eyes in light
 To which our present day is night?

It may be:—He who is our God
 And theirs, although His fixed abode
 Is highest heaven, pervades all space,
 And has with us His dwelling place;
 So He in wisdom may be pleased
 To grant to those from flesh released
 Free liberty through space to roam,
 Or find a temporary home
 Among the scenes and friends of yore,
 Seen now and known as ne'er before;
 And thus, while I am musing here,
 Some friendly spirit may be near
 To aid my thoughts and guide my pen
 To truths as yet beyond my ken.

So let it be:—my mind would fain
 Receive the truth, and wisdom gain
 From every source—I care not whence,
 So it be truth, not vain pretence.

Come, then, surrounding Spirits, come,
 Declare yourselves, and give me some
 Sure evidence that ye are here,
 And can from out your higher sphere
 Observe, or influence, conduct,
 Hold converse with—perhaps instruct,
 Those still environed with the clay
 That shuts from us your brighter day.

We would not wish to mar your rest
 With aught of ours that might molest
 Your better being, yet we know—
 At least believe—that those who go
 To realms of higher life above
 Will not forget their former love;
 And, thinking of the toilsome way
 By which they reached the land of day,
 They oft must strongly feel inclined
 To aid their friends still left behind;
 And if they can, they needs must try
 To draw us upward to the sky.

We also know that He who reigns
 In earth and heaven, in mercy deigns
 To watch us while we wander here,
 And guide us to the higher sphere;

Then—while His heart and theirs agree—

While He has power, and they have will—
What likelier than that they should be

Employed His purpose to fulfil,
And bear the blessings He bestows
To those who on His grace repose?

We cannot think that idle ease,
Or languid love, or ceaseless song,

Can souls emancipated please,
Or Heaven's beatitude prolong.

Nay; whatsoever the work may be,

The active spirit Death sets free
From earthly chains and slavery,

Must still to nobler effort rise,

And yield itself to high emprise.

The God whose never-ceasing care

All creatures of His empire share,

Who slumbers not nor sleeps, but aye

Exerts his power, by night and day

To make, to rule, to guide, sustain

All worlds and all that they contain,

Will not accept the praise of those

Who court inglorious repose

In earth or heaven: all who pray,
And all who praise, must still display
The Godlike attribute which lends
Self-sacrifice to noble ends.

Thus, since the soul's supernal joy
In heaven must be its Lord's employ,
And human spirits must incline
To aid on earth the work divine,
What nobler purpose can command
The efforts of the spirit band
Than to direct, encourage, train
Their brethren who on earth remain;
To guard them from surrounding ill,
And aid their weakness to fulfil
Their earthly task, and gain the home
Prepared for all who overcome!

Fight, more Fight.

TIME was when I believed I really knew
 The Truth—the Truth as only known to few;
 And, though it was a part of my clear creed
 That knowledge such as mine must needs proceed
 From one pure source alone, yet I was vain
 Of my pre-eminence in seeing plain
 What unto others seemed a vast profound
 Of mysteries, too deep for thought to sound.
 I pitied much their darkness, nor delayed
 Of my clear light to yield the priceless aid;
 But when my taper, which I proudly thought
 A brilliant torch, was raised and glared for nought,
 I felt it strange—yea judged it could but be
 Because those perverse souls refused to see!
 Alas! my self-exaggerated light
 Failed to reveal to my contracted sight
 That those to whose strong though untutored gaze
 My feeble torch threw no illuming rays

Were gazing as intently as was I
 On wider zones of Truth's uncharted sky,
 And seeing there what, could I then have viewed,
 Had made my wisdom's vaunting more subdued.

Since then, I humbly trust my mind has grown
 Somewhat in wisdom, and of what is known
 Perhaps knows somewhat more; but yet of all
 Else I have learned, I think to know how small
 My knowledge is—how fallible my thought—
 Is still my richest prize, for this has brought
 A freer entrance and more ample space
 For Truth, as Truth, although with form and face
 Uncouth and unexpected, it may claim
 A place already filled, and thus proclaim
 How much in faith we need a wiser guide
 Than purest creeds or churches can provide.

“Have faith and question not—believe in me—
 Nor dare to doubt the truth which I decree,”
 Declares the Church of Rome, and thus enchains
 The soaring mind, and absolutely reigns
 In place of God—despotic more than He—
 The foe of freedom—save as fiends are free.
 Alas, that souls with sense divine inspired,
 Should e'er succumb to powers of hell, conspired

In name of God to mar creation's plan

And crush the noblest attribute of man!

"Walk in the good old ways," we oft are told,

"And shun the new, nor be so rashly bold

As choose a fairer, shorter, clearer path,

Else ye are doomed to Heaven's eternal wrath."

Well, if it be so, it seems vastly strange;

For, as the wrecks of ancient realms I range,

I find the paths so varied and diverse,

Formed not to concentrate, but to disperse—

To guide to error—save all ends are true:—

I could not, no one could, in time pursue

One half their number; and which one to choose

I know not; but 'tis plain I must refuse

Far more old ways than I can ever walk—

And thus, "Keep in the old" is vainest talk;

A plea of privilege and priestly skill,

Which hampers thought, and bids "be great" "be still,"

While threats of wrath must scathless pass me by,

So long as Truth I seek with single eye.

'Tis well indeed to keep the olden way,

Untempted by the new in them to stray,

But only when the old is proved the best

Or single highway to the spirit's rest;

For when upon the old which men have trod
 From ancient days upon their way to God,
 Dark stages make the present pilgrim fear
 And long for light to shew the pathway clear,
 Should new effulgence unto him arise,
 Must he, fanatic in his faith, despise
 The boon, because he saw it not before
 Or finds it unrevealed in days of yore?
 This emanation from the source divine—
 The mind of man—should never rest supine
 Either on heights by seers of old attained
 Or those by its own earnest efforts gained.
 Nay; centred in its very essence glow
 The love of knowledge and desire to know,
 Not only all already known or taught
 But all with which futurity is fraught;
 While He who breathed it into being pleased
 That Mind by effort should be still released,
 Expanded, and enabled more and more
 To know itself and Him, with all the store
 Of wisdom, truth, and goodness which pervade
 His universe in mingled light and shade.

Eternity alone can measure truth,
 And Mind is still in undeveloped youth,

But must advance, develop, and expand
In power and knowledge yet beyond command;
While, as it grows, it oft must cast away
What erst seemed facts—and faiths which led astray.
The altitudes whence Science now aspires
Survey the ashes of extinguished fires
Where false philosophies of former days
And faiths forgotten can no longer blaze;
Yet, from the feathered falsehoods thus consumed
Spring fairer Phoenixes with wisdom plumed,
Which, in their turn exploded, may expire
And form for others fecund flames of fire!
Thus Truth shall shine and Wisdom's womb bestow
New heirs and heritage on man below,
While in the clearer climes to which we soar
Through endless ages we shall truth explore.



SACRED.

The Offering of Isaac.

O, take thy son, thine only son,
In whom thy soul delights,
And get thee to a distant land—
Moriah's mountain heights;
And there upon a mountain top
Which I will show to thee
Surrender him a sacrifice
With willing heart to Me:—
Oft by a dark and dismal way
God brings his own to brightest day.

Thus spake the Lord to Abraham,
 His servant, when grown old
 He clasped his Isaac to his heart
 With love's intensest hold;
 Yet spake not so because He wished
 That thus the son should die,
 But meaning by the strange command
 The father's faith to try:—
 The life of faith is dearer far
 To God than sacrifices are.

Soon as his God's command was heard
 The Patriarch arose,
 And, rousing his beloved son
 From slumber's soft repose,
 Ere yet the sun o'er mountain tops
 Had poured effulgent day,
 With fire and wood for sacrifice,
 The two were on their way:—
 With active step the way is trod
 That Faith sees pointed out by God.

The third day's sun saw Abraham
 Ascend Moriah's hill,
 There build his altar, bind his son,
 And raise the knife to kill;
 One moment, and the father's hand
 Shall strike the fatal blow,
 And Isaac's life-blood from his heart
 Upon the altar flow:—
 So Justice ever holds the sword
 O'er all who do not know the Lord.

But stay! God's altar never can
 With human blood be stained;
 Without the dreadful sacrifice
 The trial's end is gained
 And Abr'ham's faith triumphant stands,
 Its righteousness displayed
 By this severe command of God,
 So readily obeyed:—
 Thus faith by active works is shown
 To sway the sceptre, hold the throne.

A voice from heaven th' impending stroke
 Suspends, and stays the arm ;
 Relieves the father's breaking heart,
 And shields the son from harm :
 Then testifies that Abr'ham's faith
 His God has satisfied,
 Since thus unfailing it had stood
 When so severely tried !
 When God his people trial sends
 His mercy sure will make amends.

A ram within a thicket caught
 Soon on the altar dies ;
 And then from father and from son
 Joint prayer and praise arise :
 In adoration deeper far
 Than e'er before they knew,
 They bow before Jehovah's shrine,
 And yield the homage due :—
 How blest when thus th' afflicting rod,
 With mercy joined, brings near to God !

"The secret of the Lord is with
 Such as do fear his name,"
 Then who can tell what Abr'ham saw
 Beneath that altar's flame?
 Perhaps, beyond far distant years
 He saw Mount Calv'ry's gloom,
 And in the substituted ram
 Beheld our Surety's doom:—
 We cannot tell what light he had,
 But 'twas enough to make him glad.

While in his fellow-worshipper
 Perhaps his faith could see
 Another "promised seed," when thus
 From vengeance due set free,
 By freedom's freshest impulse brought
 To penetrate the skies
 With prayers perfumed with incense from
 Their Surety's sacrifice:—
 Thus, by a new and living way
 The soul renewed is taught to pray.

O Abraham, thou friend of God,
 What honour thou hast won
 By thus, in faith unwavering,
 Delivering up thy son!
 Most honoured 'mong his honoured ones
 Thy God hath placed thy name;
 As "Father of the faithful" seed
 The Church resounds thy fame:—
 The humblest deed of faith and love
 Must have its full reward above.

Behold, my soul, what wondrous power
 Resides in faith divine!
 And mark that faith, and faith alone,
 Can make salvation thine;
 By it we grasp and hold the hand
 Which sovereign grace supplies
 To save the sinner from his sins
 And heavenward turn his eyes:—
 To me, O may that grace be given,
 That I may rise from earth to heaven!

Bethel Beatific.

ONCE, when this old world was young,
 Heaven and earth adjacent stood;
 Angel harps on earth were strung,
 Angels joined with man and sung
 Joyous songs of brotherhood.

God the Lord in kindness bowed
 Blissful hours on earth to spend;
 Holy God in man's abode—
 Holy man with holy God—
 Walked and talked as friend with friend.

But, alas, not long endured
 Eden's happiness divine;
 Soon transgression's gloom obscured
 Heaven's own light, and man immured
 Where no radiance could shine.

Hapless Earth! cut off from Heaven!

No approach for man to God,
 Into misery, sin-driven—
 Yet one ray of hope was given
 To relieve the dreadful load.

Not again could God appear
 On the Earth, His son to own;
 Human power could never rear
 Means to reach the angels' sphere,
 Yet could Love let mercy down.

Heaven-ward could no stair arise,
 But from Heaven might one descend;
 All unseen by mortal eyes
 Mercy's ladder left the skies,
 Satan's breach again to mend.

Thus could Bethel's sleeper trace
 Where his wisdom could but grope,
 Angel messengers of grace
 Freely traversing the space
 'Twixt his sorrow and his hope.

So may I, O Gracious God,

Ever on Thy mercy stay,

And through Faith behold the road

Joining mine with thy abode—

Even Him who is “the Way.”

The Doom of Doubt.

OUT of Egypt, through the sea,
 Ransomed Israel safely trod;
 Camped by Sinai, there to be
 Taught the duty of the free
 To obey their sovereign God;
 For the fullest freedom flows
 Freest where true worship bows.

Thus instructed, though untrained,
 Canaan-ward they took their way
 Till the border land they gained
 And at Kadish they remained
 While their spies should make survey:
 Faith was weak, and thus they tried
 Whether God their Lord had lied?

Woful then became their plight,
 For the spies brought evil news:—
 There, they said, are men of might
 Far too strong for us to fight,
 So the land we must refuse:
 Foolish people, thus to scorn
 What their God had said and sworn !

Yet how many, young and old,
 With our Canaan in their eyes,
 Fail for want of faith to hold
 God's own promise and be bold
 To secure the priceless prize:
 Jesus once was sore distressed
 Over one "not far" from rest.

Banished then by God's command
 In the wilderness to pine,
 Ne'er to reach their promised land,
 But to die on desert sand
 Where no ray of hope could shine;
 Victims of their doubts and fears
 Doomed to unavailing tears.

Ah, what lamentations rose
 When their doom was realized!
 Deepest of all human woes
 Is their fate who feel the throes
 Of remorse for grace despised;
 Outcasts, though of Canaan heirs!
 Lost, with Canaan all but theirs!

Hear those youths in deep distress
 Questioning with bated breath—
 Were we twenty—were we less—
 When we spurned Jehovah's grace
 And entailed this doom of death?
 Careful counting theirs I ween
 Of the birthdays they had seen.

Thus let us our days and years
 Count with care, and wisdom learn,
 So that Faith may banish fears,
 Heal our sorrows, dry our tears,
 And eternal blessings earn:
 They their birth could not gainsay—
 We may each be born to-day.

Via, Veritas, Vita.

THE path I trod was dark and drear,
 I could not see nor feel my way;
 My heart was overcome with fear,
 I could not even dare to pray:
 "I am the Way," the Saviour cried,
 And then my journey's end I spied.

Dark doubts arose like mountains vast;
 My soul found nought wherein to trust;
 In Death's dark valley Faith was cast,
 And Hope was writhing in the dust:
 "I am the Truth," He spake again,
 And darkest mysteries were plain.

Will this new life remain, I said,
 Or is it but a passing breath?
 I knew, for me, it soon should fade
 And leave my soul again in death:
 "I am the Life," I heard Him call,
 And then to Him I trusted all!

“**G**od send Thy Light forth.”

GOD of wisdom, God of love,
 With Thee I plead in earnest prayer,
 Look from Thy throne of light above
 On me Thy creature crushed with care:
 I cannot see Thee here below,
 I know Thee not, but fain would know.

My soul is dark though wildering light
 Is glaring round me far and near;
 It but reveals how deep the night
 Must be till living light appear:
 O God, I pray Thee to outshine
 Those glaring lights with light divine.

Once from the Book which I believed
 To be Thy written word to me
 I thought my spirit had received
 Thy light in which to clearly see;
 But now thick clouds obscure my sky,
 Or growing blindness dims my eye!

O thou who art the Word, the Light,
 The Way, the Truth, the Life, the All,
 Behold my soul's perplexing plight,
 And let Thy love in mercy call;
 Call loud that I to Thee may flee,
 And find my living God in thee.

Aspiration.

§ FOR some potent potion sure
 This vile old self to slay;
 For death, and death alone, can cure
 The grievous ills I now endure
 And cause from day to day;
 Wherefore my better nature sighs,
 And sighing seeks serener skies.

For dying I would death deride,
As in autumnal days
The caterpillar crawls aside
In torpor's chrysalis to hide
Till genial summer rays
Allure the butterfly to flight—
A thing of beauty, life, and light!

The old man thus would I desire
To lay in Death's embrace,
That from his ashes may aspire
The new, exhaled by heavenly fire,
And vivified by grace:—
A being not akin to clay,
But spirit-born to brighten day!

III.

OUT of the darkness my spirit surrounding
 Still I shall cry, though my crying be faint;
 While I can hear of Thy mercy abounding
 Thou must be able to hear my complaint.

Shadows of sin, like the smoke of the city,
 Will not permit me Thy face to behold;
 O may the breath of Thy Spirit in pity
 Scatter the cloud, and Thy glory unfold!

Then shall I rise in the light of the morning
 Fresh for the toils and the trials of day;
 Ease and indulgence exultingly scorning—
 Fearing no foe that can come in my way!

Thus while I sing, Faith and Hope seem combining
 Light to bestow, and my darkness dispel;
 Now I can see the dark cloud's silver lining,
 Why should I longer in shadowland dwell?

Resignation.

 GOD, we know it were not good
 Our wishes all should be supplied;
 Our needs by Thee are understood,
 Then "as Thou wilt"—not as we would,
 Give Thou, and we are satisfied:
 We cannot doubt Thy will is best,
 And there in perfect trust we rest.

But one thing, Lord, we do entreat—
 That Thou wouldst shew the answer thine;
 If given by Thee we'll know it meet;—
 Enough to make content complete,
 And bid our hearts no more repine:
 Child-like, O Lord, we wish to be;
 But child-like, would our Father see.

O Jesus, thou canst sympathize
With this our wish, for Thou hast known
The dreadful darkness of the skies
When He is hidden from our eyes
And we feel fainting all alone;—
Then Jesus, shew thyself, and we
Shall see the Father's face in Thee!

O Holy Spirit, dove divine,
Breathe buoyant life on drooping hearts;
Let Thy illumination shine,
And Godward all our eyes incline
To greet the joy Thy smile imparts;
Then farewell darkness, doubts, and fears,—
We know them not when He appears!

“Jesus Wept.”

JESUS wept. My soul, be still,
 And calmly view Immanuel's tears:
 Each drop a mystery to fill
 Thy thoughts through never-ending years:
 Behold the God-Man groaning, weeping
 O'er him He loved, so soundly sleeping.

Jesus wept. O wondrous tears!
 The rarest pearls our earth has known!
 In these more glorious light appears
 Than earthly gems have ever shown!
 Each drop in countless dazzling rays,
 God's love to human kind displays.

Jesus wept. Why did He weep?
 Was it that Lazarus was dead?
 No; with the sisters' grief so deep
 Immanuel's heart in concert bled:
 He saw their tears, He heard their moans,
 And wept with sympathetic groans.

Jesus wept. Each starry tear
 That fell from those celestial eyes
 Seals unto men a truth most dear:—
 That Christ our Lord can sympathize
 With every human grief. For why?
 His was most true humanity.

Jesus wept. O blessed rain,
 Distilled from that dark cloud of sorrow!
 By it refreshed, our world again
 Looks forward to a bright to-morrow:
 The God who wept with human grief
 Must to the sufferer send relief.

Jesus wept,—and Jesus died:

His death brought ransom to His own;
But when at Lazarus' grave He cried,
More human tenderness was shewn:
His tomb His depth of love displayed;
This grave its wondrous breadth portrayed.

“There laid they Jesus.”

THE Lord of life, of life bereft,
Within the tomb in darkness left;
Omnipotence impotent made—
Companion of the helpless dead;
Creation's God laid low in death
Like one of merely human breath.
Astounding mystery—He lies
As if He could no more arise!
The greatest wonder earth can shew—
What can it mean—How can we know?
Some purpose vast alone could doom
The Lord of glory to the tomb.

Ah, He was nailed upon the tree
And died to purchase life for me.
He lay within the womb of earth
That I might have a second birth.
Then life I claim, since He hath died,—
A claim that will not be denied;
For He who was for sinners slain
Craves full reward for all his pain,
And mourns to see one sinner lose
The glory which His grace bestows.
Then, Jesus, take and make me Thine,
And fill me with Thy love divine.

“Come, see the Place where the Lord lay,”

THE stone is moved, I know not how;
 I look within and clearly see
 The grave is empty, and a glow
 Of light divine appears to me!
 Nor do I wonder He has fled:
 My wonder was to see Him dead.

The grave is empty, but the world
 And heaven itself are filled with life.
 Defeated Death to doom is hurled
 And vanquished, quits the scene of strife:
 The Lord is risen, and with Him rise
 All who accept His sacrifice!

I view the place where Jesus lay,
 And praise His name who thence arose,
 Transforming Earth's dark night to day
 Where grace abounds and glory grows!
 O gloomy grave, by Jesus blest,
 I long through thee to reach my rest!

“He led them out as far as Bethany.”

FROM God's city, now rejected,
 Twelve fond friends pass through the gate.
 All, save one, appear dejected,
 As if doubtful of their fate:
 He to whom their hearts are glowing
 Now they fear from them is going.

Kedron-ward behold them walking,
 All intently hearing one.
 He of cheerful mein is talking:—
 Soft and sweet his accents run.
 How could they endure to lose Him?
 Let him answer who best knows Him.

O'er the brook—the path ascending—
 Lone Gethsemane they greet;
 Towards Bethany then wending
 Whence loved friends approach and meet:
 They had fondly loved each other—
 He, those sisters and their brother.

Up the hill they climb together
 Through the olives to its brow,
 Hoping, doubting, wondering whither
 He their Leader led them now;
 Not assured, but sadly fearing
 Now their last farewell was nearing.

For his face bore an expression
 They had never seen before;
 Something causing sad impression
 They should see Him little more,
 Which impelled them to keep near Him
 While they yet might see and hear Him.

And as higher He ascended
 That expression stronger grew;
 Heavenly light and love seemed blended
 With the features that they knew:
 Moses-like, but less repelling—
 Not of Law but Gospel telling;

Till, upon the summit resting,
 So celestial He had grown,
 Royal robes were seen investing
 Jesus for His kingly throne:
 Glory from within was greeting
 Equal glory it was meeting!

Promising, instructing, blessing,
 In fond words intensely kind;
 Banishing all thoughts distressing
 From the hearts He left behind:—
 Lo, he said, though now we sever,
 I am really with you ever!

Then while looking loath at leaving,
 Though the higher realms He chose;
Dropping smiles to soothe the grieving,
 Heavenward, homeward He arose,
And beyond a cloud in glory
Closed His wondrous earthly story!

Yon Bright Land.

FAIR Earth, thy beauties I admire,
 And fondly sing their praise,
 But still my heart and soul aspire
 On fairer scenes to gaze:
 Scenes fairer as the noon of day
 Outshines the morning's dawning ray!

Thy Spring is beautiful indeed—
 Superb thy Summer flowers—
 But yon bright land to which I speed
 Requires no vernal showers:
 Its Spring can never pass away,
 Its Summer flowers can ne'er decay!

I dearly love thy mountain lakes,
Thy rivers, brooks, and streams;
But when above my soul awakes
From this the land of dreams,
With saints and seraphs me to guide,
I'll wander by Life's river side!

I deeply love thy ocean blue—
In calm or tempest-wrought;
But as the tiny drop of dew
Compared with it is nought,
So must yon sea of molten glass
Its greatest grandeur far surpass!

“Our Father.”

 THOU, Omnipotence divine,
 Prime source, sustainer, ruler, guide
 Of all the orbs in heaven that shine—
 All creatures that on earth abide,
 We bow before our Father's throne—
 Thy children, Lord, be pleased to own.

Our Father, help us each to feel
 The boundless bliss that name implies;
 All present good, eternal weal,
 A home with Thee beyond the skies!
 O gracious Father, we would be
 Thine, only Thine, and live for Thee.

We mourn, O Lord, the multitudes
 Who through Thy world in darkness plod;
 On whose dull hearts no thought intrudes
 Of thee, their Father and their God:
 These wandering waifs, O Lord reclaim,
 And make them yet revere Thy name.

Creator, universal Lord,
 Have mercy on our rebel race
 And bid our nature be restored:—
 Proclaim the kingdom of Thy grace
 Till every heart and every knee
 In homage bow alone to Thee.

And in that kingdom let there reign
 One King, one law—Thy will divine;
 Let earth resemble heaven again
 And love make all Thy will be done;
 Each soul's ambition realized
 When self to Thee is sacrificed.

Lord, for Thy glory thus we pray,
And gladly toil this end to gain;
To yield what furtherance we may,
O Lord do Thou our lives sustain:
Give daily bread, that we may give
Thee daily service while we live.

Yet, gracious Father, Thou dost know
Our weakness even with Thy grace;
How oft aside from Thee we go,
How oft Thy holy law transgress;
Forgive us, Lord, those debts to Thee,
As we give others pardon free.

And lead us, Lord, each day and hour
By paths most pleasing unto Thee;
Far from temptation's subtle power,
And from all evil keep us free;
Withdraw not, Lord, thy guiding hand,
Till safe within Thy home we stand.

Ah, Father, Lord, how much we want !
But we delight to be so poor,
That boundless riches Thou may'st grant
From out Thine own exhaustless store :
Then, kingdom, power, and glory we
Ascribe, and say, "So let it be."



